



## State of Utah

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*Governor*

GARY R. HERBERT  
*Lieutenant Governor*

## Department of Human Services

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*Executive Director*

Office of Child Protection Ombudsman

BRAD McGARRY  
*Ombudsman*

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*Deputy Ombudsman*

May 21, 2008

Rick Smith, Co-Chair  
State Quality Improvement Committee  
Office of the Guardian ad Litem  
450 S State Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111-3101

Re: QIC Recommendations

Dear Rick,

I appreciate the committee's recommendations regarding the Office of Child Protection Ombudsman (OCPO) that you forwarded to Duane Betournay, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Director on April 24, 2008.

The committee made two recommendations.

1. "That groups such as medical providers, education, law enforcement, etc., receive a letter or flyer informing them of OCPO's role/function and contact information. It was also suggested that families might need some notification beyond the posters in the DCFS offices. Is it possible to include the OCPO's purpose and contact information on some of the information the families receive upon removal of their child?"
2. That a survey of some sort be developed to send recipients of OCPO services to measure their satisfaction. Of particular interest was whether or not complainants felt that OCPO being a part of DHS and housed in the same building as DCFS allowed for enough distance/objectivity."

OCPO appreciates the suggestion of the committee to inform the public through the groups identified by the committee of OCPO's role and function. OCPO will consider the most effective way and the means to provide information about OCPO with these and other professionals.

In 2007, OCPO created posters that explained how one would go about having their concerns or complaints addressed. The poster included information on OCPO and provided contact information. The posters were distributed to all DCFS offices throughout the State. OCPO requested that the posters be placed in waiting rooms or on bulletin boards for general public access. OCPO has always recognized the need to inform the public and the consumers of DCFS services of OCPO's role and function. Other forms of advertisement have not been pursued because of not having enough staff to meet the potential demand.

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The committee recommended that OCPO conduct a satisfaction survey. A customer satisfaction survey was completed in 2000 when Marsha Peterson was the Ombudsman. Then, under the direction of Craig Monson, another customer survey was conducted in 2003.

In 2003, OCPO pulled a random sample from the complainants who had contacted OCPO in the previous year. At the time the survey was completed, there were less than 6 surveys returned to OCPO although OCPO provided a self addressed stamped envelope for each survey sent. Mr. Monson and the Deputy contacted three constituents and arranged to conduct personal interviews. Only two constituents followed through with the interview. The results of the survey did not provide any substantive information from which to draw any conclusions. Anecdotally, complainants seemed to be satisfied with the service they received from OCPO when their concerns are found to be valid. Constituents who want OCPO to compel DCFS to return children to their custody or direct DCFS to change a child's placement, for example, are not satisfied that OCPO can provide them with the outcome they are seeking. OCPO is generally told by the constituent that they feel listened to and that OCPO understands their concerns and are appreciative of information OCPO is able to provide regarding DCFS processes or additional resources. OCPO does hear occasionally that the constituent believes OCPO is a part of DCFS or that OCPO protects DCFS regardless of what the concern might be. OCPO does spend time with the constituent to educate him/her about the independence, role and function of this office.

The prior survey did not reveal enough information to assist OCPO to consider altering the current OCPO processes. In light of the results of the prior efforts to obtain constituent feedback, it's unlikely that the time needed to develop and complete a survey would be an efficient use of our limited resources.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dianne Warner-Kearney, MSW  
Deputy Ombudsman